

CLAIMS:

1. A portable translator for translating a first visual text in a first language into a second visual text in a second language, the portable translator comprising:

(a) a viewfinder for aiming the portable translator in a selectable direction and from a selectable distance at an object whereupon the first visual text appears, and for identifying an image including a target area containing the first visual text;

(b) an electro-optical image acquisition unit including a lens and a light-sensitive sensor operative to acquiring a digital representation of said target area;

(c) an OCR unit operative to transforming said digital representation into a first string of character codes representative of the first visual text;

(d) a translator unit including an electronic dictionary, said translator unit operative to transforming said first string of character codes into a second string of character codes representative of the second visual text; and

(e) a display operative to showing the second visual text in accordance with said second string.

2. The portable translator of claim 1 further comprising:

(f) a screen operative to showing said image; and

(g) a cursor control means for identifying said target area within said image.

3. The portable translator of claim 2 wherein said display forms part of said screen.

4. The portable unit of claim 2 wherein said viewfinder forms part of said screen.

5 5. The portable translator of claim 1 wherein said lens is a zoom lens.

6. The portable translator of claim 1 wherein said lens includes a focus means.

7. The portable translator of claim 6 wherein said focus means comprises an auto-focus control.

10 8. The portable translator of claim 1 further comprising a memory for recording a plurality of images.

9. The portable translator of claim 8 wherein said OCR unit is furthermore operable with images replayed from said memory.

10. The portable translator of claim 1 further comprising a light source
15 operative to illuminating said target area.

11. An improved portable digital still camera for general still photography, including a viewfinder, a lens, an electronic light-sensitive sensor and a memory, for allowing a user to take a picture of a selected object and store the picture as a digital image in the memory, the improvement comprising a translator device included in the
20 digital still camera and cooperating with the memory to transform a first text in a first language included in the digital image into a second text in a second language, wherein the digital still camera is operative to displaying said second text.

12. The improved portable digital still camera of claim 11 further comprising a cursor control means operable by the user to identify said first text within the digital image.

13. An improved portable digital video camera for general video motion
5 photography, including a viewfinder, a lens, an electronic light-sensitive sensor and a memory, for allowing a user to take a picture of a selected object and store the picture as a digital image in the memory, the improvement comprising a translator device included in the digital video camera and cooperating with the memory to transform a
10 first text in a first language included in the digital image into a second text in a second language, and wherein the digital video camera is operative to displaying said second text.

14. The improved portable digital video camera of claim 13 further comprising a cursor control means operable by said user to identify said first text within the digital image.

15. A method for employing a digital camera usable for general
15 photography, the digital camera having a display, the method for translating a first text in a first language included in a digital image captured by the digital camera into a second text in a second language, the method comprising the steps of:

- 20
- (a) providing an OCR unit within the digital camera to digitally process at least a selected part of the image to convert the first text into a first string of character codes;
 - (b) providing a translator unit within in the digital camera to translate said first string of character codes into a second string of character codes representative of the second language;

- (c) sending said second string of character codes to the display and displaying said second string of character codes as the second text.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein said digital camera is a digital still
5 camera.

17. The method of claim 15 wherein said digital camera is a digital video
camera.

18. The method of claim 15 wherein said digital camera is a digital video
camera.